

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Office Action July 1, 2009. Claims 1-7 were previously cancelled, claims 8 and 11 are amended¹, and new claims 26 and 27 are added. Claims 8-27 remain pending in view of the above amendments. Applicant notes that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. Applicant also notes that the remarks presented herein have been made merely to clarify the claimed embodiments from elements purported by the Examiner to be taught by the cited reference. Such remarks, or a lack of remarks, are not intended to constitute, and should not be construed as, an acquiescence, on the part of the Applicant: as to the purported teachings or prior art status of the cited references; as to the characterization of the cited references advanced by the Examiner; or as to any other assertions, allegations or characterizations made by the Examiner at any time in this case. Applicant reserves the right to challenge the purported teaching and prior art status of the cited references at any appropriate time. Applicant also reverses the right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims without prejudice and does not admit the characterization and interpretations of the cited art advanced in the Office Action. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 8-12, 14, 16, 17 and 19-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/0127432 (*Saito*). Anticipation requires the presence in a single prior art reference disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim. The following discussion

¹ Support for the amendments to claims 8 and 11 can be found at least in Figure 3 and the corresponding description in the specification. Support for the new claims may be found at least on lines 2-3, and 11-13 of page 20 and lines 1-2 of page 21.

illustrates that the cited art does not disclose each and every element of the rejected claims, as the elements are arranged in the claims.

Claim 8 as amended recites "a first washing step for washing a surface of a disk-shaped glass plate with an acid washing liquid, ... ; thereafter a step for grinding the altered surface layer .. ; and thereafter a second washing step for washing the surface with an alkaline washing liquid." Accordingly, the method according to claim 8 executes the first washing step (acid washing), the step for grinding, and the second washing step (alkali washing) in this order.

Saito does not disclose the order of the steps as recited in claim 8. As a result, *Saito* does not disclose the elements of claim 8 as the elements are arranged in claim 8. More specifically, *Saito* states in paragraphs 0056-0060:

[0056] In the invention, prior to the formation of a surface roughness (texture), the glass plate is usually subjected to rough polishing (grinding) to regulate the thickness of the glass plate to a given size so as to secure flatness required of glass substrates for magnetic recording media. Thereafter, the ground surface is mirror-polished... (Emphasis added)

[0057] After the glass plate which has been mirror-polished is washed, processing marks are formed in a circumferential direction of the...glass plate. A suitable method for forming processing marks in the invention is to rub the substrate surface with a processing fluid comprising a slurry and a processing tape. One technique for rubbing a glass substrate surface with a processing tape is illustrated in FIG. 1. In this technique, a glass substrate which has been formed into a doughnut disk shape is kept being rotated at a constant speed, and a tape is pressed against the glass plate at a constant pressure to thereby form processing marks in the circumferential direction. Although the rotational speed of the glass plate is not particularly limited, it is usually regulated to about from 5 to 1,000 rpm. The pressure at which the processing tape is pressed also is not

particularly limited. Use of lower pressing pressures gives finer textures, while higher pressing pressures enable high-speed processing. An appropriate pressing pressure may be suitably selected according to the desired texture shape. In general, pressing pressures of about from 20 to 500 g/cm² are preferred because such pressures enable efficient formation of processing marks. The processing tape is preferably caused to run at a speed of from 10 to 10,000 mm/sec. (Emphasis added)

[0058] ...After processing marks are formed while supplying a slurry, the glass plate maybe further treated with the tape while supplying pure water or a commercial, neutral or alkaline detergent in order to remove the residual slurry. Thereafter the glass plate is preferably further cleansed by ultrasonic cleaning, shower cleaning, etc. (Emphasis added)

[0059] The glass plate in which processing marks have been formed in tile circumferential direction by the method described above is etched by a chemical method. The etchant is not particularly limited in kind. However, an etchant containing hydrofluoric acid or hydrosilicofluoric acid or containing both is preferred in that a large difference in etching rate between the areas having the processing marks and the areas not having the marks can be obtained and that etching can be satisfactorily controlled. (Emphasis added)

[0060] The reasons why the areas having processing marks differ in etching rate from the areas not having processing marks are presumed to be as follows. The processing marks formed by a method according to the invention mostly have a physical shape and have a permanent compression strain due to the processing pressure. It is thought that the areas having such a compression strain are less susceptible to chemical etching (having a lower etching rate in the glass depth direction) than the areas not having the strain. (Emphasis added)

Saito discloses a method that executes a grinding step (0056), a mirror surface formation step (0056), a mirror surface washing step (0057), a process mark formation

step (0057), a slurry removal step (0058, alkali washing) and an acid etching step (0059, acid washing) in this order.

Saito does not disclose washing the mirror surface with an acid solution prior to the process mark formation step (0057). Paragraph 0060 of *Saito* clearly teaches executing the process mark formation step (0057) prior to the acid etching step (0059). Hence, the feature of claim 8, namely, "a first washing step for washing a surface of a disk-shaped glass plate with an acid washing liquid...; thereafter a step for grinding the altered surface layer...; and thereafter a second washing step for washing the surface with an alkaline washing liquid" distinguishes claim 8 over *Saito*.

Anticipation requires the presence, in a single prior art reference, disclosure of each and every element of the claimed invention, arranged as in the claim. In view of the distinction of claim 8 noted above, at least one claimed element is not present in *Saito*. Hence, *Saito* does not anticipate claim 8.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that claim 8 is patentable over the cited art. The independent claim 11 includes at least some generally similar elements and is patentable for at least the same reasons. Claims 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17 and 19-24 depend from claim 8 or 11, and so at least similarly distinguish over *Saito*. In view of the foregoing discussion, the rejection of claims 8-12, 14, 16, 17 and 19-24 is improper and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

New Claims

New claims 26 and 27 each recites, among other things, a feature of "a deviation rate of surface roughness Ra of the glass substrate is less than or equal to 3%." *Saito* describes a surface roughness Ra, however; *Saito* does not discuss a deviation rate of surface roughness Ra of the glass substrate. Hence, the feature of claims 26 and 27 is a distinction over *Saito*.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Saito*. Claims 13 and 15 are allowable because they depend on claim 11, which is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the foregoing

discussion. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 13 and 15 is overcome and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

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Respectfully submitted,

/Carl T. Reed/ Reg. # 45454
CARL T. REED

Registration No. 45,454
Attorney for Applicant
Customer No. 022913
Telephone No. 801.533.9800